

A TRIBUTE TO TOM LEDERER

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Tom Lederer. A lifelong resident of Philadelphia who gave much to the community, Tom was called by his Creator on Thursday March 22nd.

Thomas John Lederer was born on September 29, 1934 in Philadelphia to a family that believed in the principles of democratic government and civil service. His father Miles served as both Chair of the Democratic Party in Philadelphia and as a state legislator. His brothers Raymond and Bill would also serve in the legislature, with Ray becoming a member of Congress. Tom's brother Miles headed the local Riggers Union, while his brother Fran was the Chief of the County Detectives. Tom spent a lifetime serving as an inspector with the Philadelphia Water Department and raising kids, first his own six and then sixteen grandchildren. He also served the community as Boy Scout leader, community organizer and educator.

He was an active member of his Church, St. Michael's Roman Catholic, and his community. He was a Board Member of the Roman Catholic Alumni Association, Past President of the St. Joseph Prep Father's Club, Chairman of Kensington South Neighborhood Advisory Committee, Boy Scout Master of Troop 488, Member of the Horticultural Society of Philadelphia and Penn State's Gardening Progress program, winner of a "Black Eye" community award, but most of all he was "Pop" to his sixteen grandchildren.

However, in his mind, his most proud association was being Rita Lavery's husband. Born two days apart, they were married for 56 years and friends for 70 of his 77 years. They started kindergarten at St. Michaels on the same day and were classmates and pals thereafter.

Together with Tom's wife, Rita, his six children, his sixteen grandchildren, and all his family and friends, I mourn his passing but celebrate his life.

HONORING MS. GERRY SMITH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Women's History Month, I rise to honor one of South Florida's finest community leaders, Ms. Geraldine "Gerry" Smith.

Ms. Smith currently serves as President of the Women's Club of Hialeah. She was born and raised by in Hialeah and has dedicated her time and efforts to our community. She has a passion for helping others, and relishes her current role as president. Previously she worked on the School Board in Hialeah, a position she enjoyed and served admirably. More recently, she has found a way to combine her artistic ability and her passion for the community by providing an educational hobby for local senior citizens.

Every Saturday morning Ms. Smith teaches a group of senior citizens how to make jew-

elry, along with other activities. Her goal is to ensure that senior citizens have a great time and remain active after retirement. She also donates her time and money to Angel's Reach, an organization which helps children with autism. Together with the Women's Club of Hialeah, Ms. Smith actively supports the autistic community in South Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Gerry Smith for her continued service to the South Florida community and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable individual.

HONORING TREY SMITH

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Trey Smith of the Moberly High School Wrestling team for his first Class 2 Missouri State Wrestling Championship. Mr. Smith won by decision in the 152-pound weight class.

Mr. Smith and his coaches should be commended for all their hard work throughout the regular season and for bringing home the state championship title in the Class 2 152-pound weight class to his school and community.

I ask that you join me in recognizing Mr. Smith for a job well done!

HONORING THE SERVICE OF JOHN V. SULLIVAN, HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize parliamentarian John V. Sullivan for his long and distinguished service to the House of Representatives. Tomorrow, after 25 years of service to the House, John is retiring.

John is one of only four Parliamentarians who have served the House of Representatives. In this rare company, John stands out. In many ways, the Parliamentarian is the keeper of order in a House increasing lacking in civility. That John is equally respected on both sides of the aisle is testament to his fair hand and steady demeanor.

Before coming to Congress, John served in the United States Air Force as a Judge Advocate General (JAG). In this capacity, John had to represent, in a legal capacity, many odd and unruly individuals: an experience that prepared him well for his current position.

I will miss John's steady presence as Parliamentarian. However, I know the House will be well served by the excellent staff John assembled during his tenure.

John, thank you for your lifetime of public service, and good luck in your future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE MOUNT VERNON GIRLS BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the girls of the Mount Vernon Lady Mountaineers Basketball Team for winning the Missouri Class 3 State Championship.

Basketball is a sport that challenges the human spirit and tests the mental and physical abilities of the players. These girls, Amelia Bramer, Sally Cowherd, Danielle Goodman, Madison Hadlock, Jenna Kleine, Tamiaya Henderson, Audrey LaSalle, Blair Tettenhorst, Shailyn Benbrook, Mackenzie Farmer, Kaylee Hood, Megan Pope, and Shea Vandergrift, faced those challenges and as a result became a team. They trained as one, they competed as one, and together through their hard work and dedication they won the Missouri Class 3 State Championship.

Of course, the basketball players aren't the only champions; they had an outstanding team of talented coaches supporting them and guiding them along the way. I commend Head Coach Doug Hepler and assistant coaches Bridgett Schmutz, and Tom Cox, on an amazing accomplishment and a job well done.

The Lady Mountaineers team had an edge against each and every one of their opponents; their friends, family, and fans attended the games, cheered them on throughout the basketball season and followed them to Columbia for the state championships. The Mount Vernon community is justifiably proud of their team, and the team is fortunate to have such strong support from their community.

As if winning a state championship isn't enough of an accomplishment, the Mount Vernon Lady Mountaineers Team has the distinct honor of winning it two of the last three years. This shows that our athletes and coaches in Mount Vernon are among the best in America and can stand proud in their accomplishments.

But even more important than that, the girls of the Mount Vernon Basketball team will have memories to last a lifetime. They've had that extraordinarily opportunity to live the dream of anyone who has ever dreamed of competing with the best and achieving victory.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Mount Vernon Lady Mountaineers Basketball Team, the Missouri Class 3 State Champions.

HONORING JOSEPH C. THOMAS FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable public servant, former Mississippi State Senator Joseph C. Thomas. Senator Thomas is a lifelong resident of Yazoo City, Mississippi. He is a graduate of Jackson State University where he

received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration and is a proud graduate of the University of Mississippi's School of Banking. After 30 years of service Senator Thomas retired as Vice President of AmSouth Bank.

In 1977, Senator Thomas received the Jackson State University Business Award and was selected by the Mississippi Economic Council as one of 50 outstanding young men under the age of 35 in the state of Mississippi. In that same year, he was also the recipient of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Award in Washington D.C. A lover of history, Senator Thomas has served as Chairman of the Oakes African-American Culture Center since its start in 1992, earning him recognition as one of the most prominent Afro-American historians in the state of Mississippi.

Senator Thomas is a lifelong public servant. He served as National Treasurer and Executive Vice President of the Friends of Amistad, a national organization in support of the Amistad Research Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. He served on the Jackson State University National Development Foundation Board of Directors, served as Chairman of the Management Team of the Yazoo County Fair and Civic League, Inc., and was president of the League Management Team Corporation, whose purpose is to provide housing for the elderly and handicapped.

In 1984 Senator Thomas was appointed to the Yazoo City Public Service Commission, where he served as Vice Chairman from 1986 to 1995, and was elected Chairman in April 2000. He also headed the Policy Council and on the Board of Directors of the American Public Power Association, a national organization representing about 2,000 not-for-profit community owned electric utilities. Senator Thomas has also served as President of the Yazoo City Municipal School Board as well as Vice Chairman of the Mississippi Real Estate Appraisal Board.

In 2003, his lists of public service accomplishments were increased when he was elected as State Senator in Mississippi's 21st District. During his terms in office, he served on the Economic Development & Tourism, Education, Finance, Insurance, Judiciary, Division B and Public Health & Welfare Committees. In addition to his work in the State Legislator, Mr. Thomas has served on the National Conference of State Legislatures Health Committee and the Southern Conference of State Legislatures Education Committee.

Senator Thomas is married to the former Elizabeth Wilburn of Benton, Mississippi, and they are the parents of three children, Joseph, Jr., Kirk, and Whitney. They also have two grandchildren, Tytianna and Kameron.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing former State Senator Joseph C. Thomas for his unyielding dedication and service to Yazoo City, Mississippi and the entire state of Mississippi.

**NATIONAL ESSENTIAL TREMOR
AWARENESS MONTH**

HON. KEVIN YODER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, today, I express my support and recognize March as National

Essential Tremor Awareness Month. Essential Tremor, commonly known as ET, is a progressive neurological condition that impacts the lives of up to 10 million Americans. Every day those afflicted with this disorder face a rhythmic trembling of the hands, head, voice, legs or trunk. Daily activities that many of us take for granted, such as eating, drinking and writing, may become unbearable or even impossible.

Unfortunately, there is no medical test to easily diagnose this condition and it is often confused with Parkinson's disease and dystonia. In addition, due to stereotypes, embarrassment and a general lack of awareness, many people with ET never seek medical care or treatment. This can lead to more medical issues such as depression or isolation.

For these reasons, I appreciate the efforts of my predecessor, Rep. Dennis Moore, who recognized the importance of early awareness of this condition and in 2010 introduced legislation to declare the month of March as National Essential Tremor Awareness month.

Today, on the second anniversary of the passage of this legislation, I am happy to do my part to help increase awareness of this debilitating condition. I am honored to represent the home of the International Essential Tremor Foundation in Lenexa, Kansas. The IETF has served as an invaluable resource for thousands of its members since 1988, providing global educational information, services and support.

Most of all, the IETF provides hope. Staff, board members and volunteers work tirelessly to empower those with ET in Kansas and across the nation to regain control of their lives by providing educational opportunities, treatment options and coping skills necessary to minimize the impact of ET and improve the quality of life for those who suffer. I commend them for their outstanding efforts and look forward to working together to raise awareness and eventually, find a cure.

**TRIBUTE TO MS. BERNIE WONG,
PRESIDENT OF THE CHINESE
AMERICAN SERVICE LEAGUE ON
HER RECEIPT OF PRESIDENT
OBAMA'S CHAMPION OF CHANGE
AWARD AT THE WHITE HOUSE**

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I consider Ms. Bernie Wong to be among the very best of Social Workers in the United States of America or any place else in the world today. Bernie is being cited by President Obama for her outstanding leadership and development of the Chinese American Service League in Chicago. The Champion of the "Change Award," recognizes a small select group of Americans who embody, innovate, educate and build. The Award ceremony is held at the White House to honor those who exemplify Cesar Chavez's core values including service to other, knowledge, innovation, acceptance of all people, and respect for life and the environment. Bernie Wong is being recognized for her tireless efforts on behalf of Chinese Chicagoans. Ms. Wong is one of ten individuals nationwide to receive this prestigious honor.

Bernie Wong was the youngest of seven children and grew up poor, but never realized it. A product of a catholic school upbringing, Bernie learned early in life the meaning of generosity and compassion for others. Bernie's mother was always available to help others in need and would take Bernie and her siblings to visit the sick every week and provide food for people. Experiences in Bernie early years set the stage for her mission driven approach to serving others with dignity and respect. At eighteen, Bernie left Hong Kong for Sioux City, Iowa where she earned a four year scholarship to pursue a Bachelors' Degree in Sociology from Briar Cliff College. She went on to earn a Masters' Degree in Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis, MO. Bernie truly understand what poor new immigrants face when confronted by completely different culture and language. This realization gave her the courage to gather a few friends and begin the task of building the Chinese American Service League from the ground up.

Founded in 1978, with a desk and chairs, the Chinese American Service League is now the largest and most comprehensive social service agency in the Midwest dedicated to the needs of Asian Americans. Housed in the award winning Kam L. Liu Building, and supported by an annual budget of \$12 million, CASL's program reach over 17,000 clients each year. CASL services everyone in need, but primarily focuses on serving Chinese American immigrants in the metropolitan Chicago area. CASL's clients are low-income and a significant portion served is newly arrived immigrants. These individuals often have little formal education and possess a few transferable skills. Since 90% of CASL's clients speak little to no English, they find themselves unable to access needed social services. CASL provides a critical safety-net by employing over 400 multilingual professionals and support staff. CASL serves a vital niche in the community, often taking referrals from other social service agencies, neighborhood organizations, and government institutions in order to serve clients with specific language or other special needs. Bernie is a true she-roe and leader in her community. She is indeed a champion of change and I salute President Obama for recognizing it. She deserves every accolade that we can shower upon her.

HONORING CLAUDIA PUIG

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month, I rise today to honor Ms. Claudia Puig, a highly recognized national broadcast executive with over 26 years of experience in the U.S. Hispanic media market.

Ms. Puig was born in Cuba but was forced into exile after her father, a Cuban hero, was taken from her side by the tyrannical Castro regime. Since that time, Ms. Puig has worked hard and established herself as one of Miami's premier broadcast executives. She began her career in advertising/sales at AT&T BellSouth; having a strong work ethic, she quickly achieved Elite Club status, making her one of